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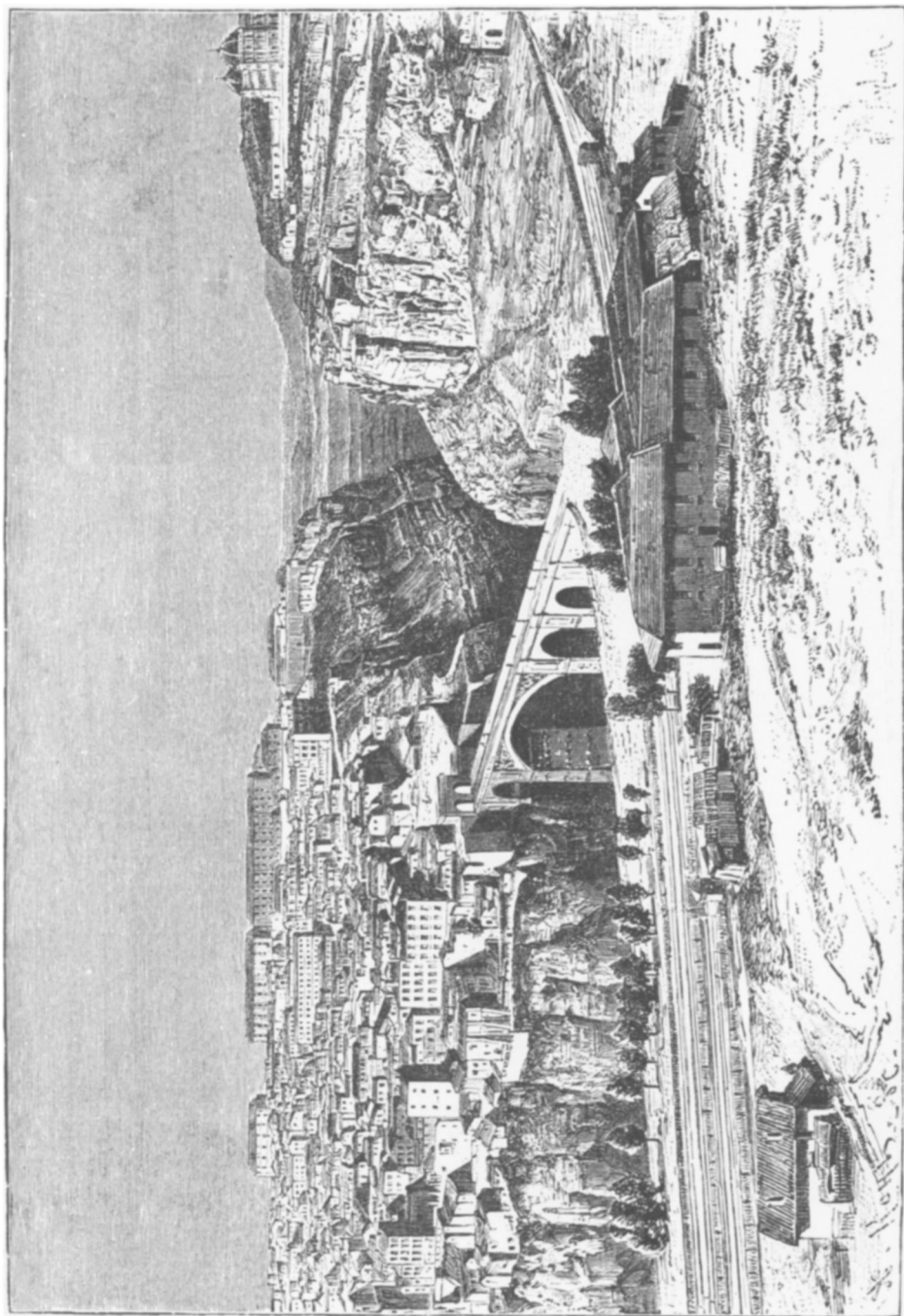
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A LOOK AT ALGERIA AND TUNIS.

BY

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To open this paper with a confession :—I went to Algeria for a stepping-stone to Spain, to trace the progress of Arab civilization, or rather the progression of that flood of Arabians that overflowed Egypt and North Africa and thence all Spain, to and beyond the Pyrenees a thousand years ago.

In the following sequence, somewhat we may trace it : Damascus, Cairo, Carthage, Algeria, Tangier, Andaluz. And in Andaluz in Southern Spain, do we not find Granada, Seville, Cordova, Cadiz, Palos? Cadiz and Palos, whence Columbus sailed to America.

Africa and Spain, then, do they not furnish us with the prefatory pages of America's history?

No, I do not deny the Norsemen anything; I say merely, it is a feeble glimmer the North Star gives us, as compared with the steady ray from the Star of the East.

I woke one morning in Algiers. It was a bright cool and windy morning, that of the twentieth of March.

Though early, a large proportion of the population seemed to be astir, and I had company everywhere, yet not an obtrusive company. The population of Algiers, Arab, Moor, Nubian, French, etc., is thoroughly cosmopolitan ; it manifests no surprise at anything, and this, I take it, is owing to its own heterogeneity, for there never was, certainly, anything more unique than itself. In one word : as to situation, as to composition, as to surroundings, Algiers is most beautiful. Its beauty is of the Oriental type, with an intrusion from France. The French structures, which are mainly along the quays and in the lower part of the town, are of themselves fine and even grand, but they spoil the picture of Algiers from the sea by breaking the continuity of the converging lines that lead up the hill-side from the water edge. In general outline this city is an isosceles triangle resting against a background of red and verdure-clad hills. Not inaptly, the ancient Arabs compared it to a diamond with an emerald setting. A milky opal it seemed to me, with its iridescence clouded over, for the walls and roof are creamy hued, and from a little distance blend most beautifully with the surroundings. The general slope of the Sahel or chain of hills behind and extending beyond the city, is toward the south and east. From the blue waters of the deep bay, the city mounts the hill in a succession of terraces line above line, the modern French houses near the water line, the true Arab city higher up, and the apex of the pyramid crowned by the Kasba or ancient citadel of the Beys, some 400 feet above the quays. Since the French occupation, now some fifty years past, the modern buildings above the entire waterfront have been erected. The most magnificent work

here seems to be along the quays, a series of arches rising some forty feet above the water line, in two tiers, covering an area of eleven acres, with a frontage of 3700 feet, and occupied as warehouses and storage-rooms, some 350 in number. This great work was the achievement of Sir Morton Peto ; it cost some £300,000, and was completed about twenty years ago. This system of arches supports the grand avenue formerly called the " Boulevard de l' Impératrice " but now the " Boulevard de la République." As it overlooks the enclosed harbor, the beautiful bay and the shipping and gives glimpses of the Atlas Mountains beyond, this boulevard is the favorite promenade of an afternoon and evening, and is densely crowded. The finest buildings, six to eight stories in height, front towards this boulevard and the bay, and the best hotels are here, nearly all with a line of arcades. All the buildings of the city are of stone, massive structures, many with white or tinted walls and roofs of tiles. There is no structure in the world that lends itself so perfectly to become a component part of the landscape as the stone-walled building with roof of richly tinted tiles. I wonder why we do not use this kind more in America.

An unbroken line of fortification surrounds the city, beginning at either end of the boulevard, running up the hills behind it and crowning the crest, a high wall, loop-holed, battlemented and buttressed by occasional forts. Two great jetties sweep around from north and south and enclose a sheltered harbor, 222 acres in area, with a depth of 40 feet, and a width of entrance something over 1000 feet. The breakwater was begun in 1836, and is said to have been the first experiment in constructing

works of this kind with blocks of concrete. It was a successful experiment, and, even though some of the great blocks have been undermined and broken down, the enclosed harbor is perfectly sheltered. Beacons at either extremity, one showing a green and the other a red light, guide the mariner into the harbor at night. All this was a modern work ; but there had existed, previous to the coming of the French, a small harbor protected by a mole. This was constructed in 1518 by the first of the pirate Deys who made the name of Algiers such a terror to followers of the sea. Not only are the remains of this still seen, but even the light-house built in 1544 yet stands. It is octagonal in shape, one hundred and twenty feet high, and displays a fixed white light visible fifteen miles at sea. This light-house of the pirates is built upon the remains of a fort the Spaniards erected and held for many years, called by them Fort Peñon. The fortification, as already mentioned, begins at the breakwater on either side and entirely encloses not alone the city but the hill upon which it is built. A great wall was built from the sea to the Kasba in 1540 by one of the pashas, and in 1581 the fort at the eastern end of the Boulevard de la République, known as the Fort Bab-Azzoun. The present line of environment consists of a high rampart, parapet and ditch, with here and there bastions stretching around from sea to sea. To the north is the city gate of Bab-el Oued, to the south the gate of Bab-Azzoun.

My room at the hotel faced the the sea, and was at a height sufficient to give me glimpses of a great deal beyond the bay. Such sunrises as I saw from my little room were of the kind to live in memory forever. I

always retired with the *jalousies* drawn aside, so that the first morning beams should apprise me of the coming sun. Then I would lie against my pillows in ecstasy, watching in wonder the beginning of another day. First the mists on the Mediterranean would dissolve and roll upward, disclosing white, pointed sails against the blue, then the snow peaks of the distant Atlas became slowly tinged with pink, deepening to crimson and then glowing like burnished gold, as the great red orb lifted itself above their crests. Fleecy clouds hung about the horizon for an hour or so, then disappeared, as the sun fairly entered upon his daily journey across a cloudless sky. The noises on the quay and in the street below increased as the hours went by, dying away at noon, but swelling to a perfect uproar late in the afternoon and early in the evening. Then, from dusk till midnight, the Frenchmen are in their glory. They swarm the streets, promenade the avenue, gather in groups around the tables on the walks and squares, chatter incessantly, shout, sing, and fill the air with music. Wherever the Frenchman goes, there goes a bit of Paris. He is always aggressively happy, always seems determined that the world shall see what a blithe and light-hearted creature he can be. The grand promenade is along the Boulevard de la République, above the quays, beneath the corridors of the great hotels and around the Place du Gouvernement. These wide French streets and boulevards are the cleanest and most pleasant thoroughfares, but the narrow lanes that branch out from them and climb the hill are, by far, the dirtiest and most interesting. Such are the Rue de la Kasba, the Rues Kléber, Ben Ali, and de la Mer Rouge. In

the Rue de la Mer Rouge one may ascend by steps, 500 in number, and, of course, no carriage can enter. But the steepness and the steps offer no obstacle to the donkeys, that crowd you against the walls at unexpected corners and act as though they owned the entire alley. Cautiously threading your way along and up this tortuous street, you have glimpses of the Orient that will repay all your exertion ; of Arab dens, swarms of half-naked children, rows of Arab shoes with their heels chopped off, peeps into dimly-lighted dens, from the obscurity of which gleam out wolfishly the eyes of masculine Arabs, while a more tender light may at rare intervals gladden you from the orbs of some Moorish damsel. If we climb high enough, we shall reach certain corners where we can look back over the roofs, and out through the rift in the walls, to the shining sea beyond. Climbing yet higher, we reach the Kasba or citadel, the ancient palace of the Deys, the foundations of which were begun in 1506. It caps the summit of the hill, the apex of the shining triangle of white houses and mosques lying against the Sahel. A fine mosque and minaret stand near and ornamental tiles are yet to be seen in place, suggestive of former elegance. Here dwelt those semi-savage Turks and Moors, whose barbarities held Christendom in awe for several centuries. In the centre of the Place du Gouvernement is the fine equestrian statue of the Duke d'Orléans, and on one side a large mosque, with a square minaret, about ninety feet high, in which is a clock. A more ancient mosque, said to have been erected in the eleventh century, is the *Djamaa el Kebir*, in the Rue de la Marine, very near to the other. Its interior is like that of all mosques,

with massive columns supporting the roof upon Moorish arches. Coarse matting covers the floor and protects it from the foot of the unbeliever. You may enter any mosque in Algiers if you take off your shoes and carry them in your hands. You may keep on your hat, but you *must* take off your shoes. At the entrance to every mosque, or in the court, is a fountain where the Moslems wash their feet before entering the holy place. A few lamps are hung here, and the only other objects to attract attention are the *Mimbar*, or pulpit, and the *Mihrab*, or holy niche towards Mecca.

More than a hundred mosques are said to have stood in Algiers previous to the French invasion, but doubtless many of them were merely *koubas*, or the tombs of Arab saints. These may be seen dotting every hill crest in the country, and occupying nearly every prominent situation in Algiers. The finest is that of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman, above the garden Marengo. The saint died in 1471, and his beautiful mausoleum is hung with the richest silk drapery, banners, lamps, and ostrich eggs. The cemetery in front and around it is charming, in its quaintest tombs and headstones, where rest the ashes of many Mahometan rulers, the latest interred there being the Dey of Constantine. Below this enclosed cemetery lies an attractive spot, the garden Marengo, where many strange plants flourish, where serpentine walks lead to glorious outlooks over the sea, and where coolness and shade ever invite the traveller to rest. In its centre stands an ornamental kiosk decorated with fanciful tiles. Speaking of religious edifices, we should not neglect the French Cathedral, in the Place Malakoff, built on the site of the Mosque of

Hassan. A broad flight of twenty-three steps leads to the entrance, within the portico, with its four black-veined marble columns. More conspicuous, both from its position and its architecture, is the famous church of Our Lady of Africa—Notre Dame d'Afrique—perched upon a commanding promontory a short distance beyond the Bad el Oued, or northern gate. It is a grand structure in the Romano-Byzantine style. This may be called the church of the sailors, as here are said masses especially for those lost at sea. To the brow of the promontory, every Sunday, the clergy march in procession, and perform funeral ceremonies above the vast grave of the sea yawning at their feet. Out in this direction and above the city, the views from the hill-tops are beautiful. Leaving the city by the southern gate, at several kilometres distance we find a delightful garden of all sorts of tropical plants and trees, called the Jardin d'Essai. On the way we pass the broad parade ground where the soldiers manœuvre and where the Arabs camp with their camels.

Above this is an Arab cemetery, which is much frequented on Fridays by the Moorish women. It contains the sacred tomb or *kouba* of Sidi Mohammed Ben Abd-er-Rhaman bou Kouberain, or the man with two tombs. The most attractive district of Algiers is that beyond the Porte d'Isly, called Mustafa Supérieur, where the houses of the European residents are mostly built and where the numerous villas, many of them in Moorish style, stand among gardens. Here the summer palace of the Governor General is built, thoroughly Oriental in its architecture and tropical in its surroundings.

On my first trip to Mustafa Supérieur I met in the

omnibus the British Consul General Sir Lambert Playfair, the author of the "Guide to Algeria" and of various books on Africa and the Mediterranean. He insisted that I should go with him to his house.

Sir Lambert is a brother of Sir Lyon Playfair. He has lived twenty years and more in India and Africa, and is ever active and alert. I was much interested in some mosaics he was making with his own hand from native marbles of Algeria; and as we had common topics of interest in birds and flowers, we talked till nearly dark, and I went away with a delightful impression of British culture and hospitality. Sir Lambert declares the views from Mustafa Supérieur to be second to but one on the Mediterranean, and as I stood at his windows and in his garden, and wended my way down the winding road to the city, with views combined of land and sea, framed in tropical vegetation, I was inclined to think with him that this was one of the favored countries of the earth.

FRENCH PROGRESS IN ALGERIA.

If anything be needed to illustrate French push and progress, and their fitness for successful colonization, it is to be found in their manner of road and railway construction. The French are the Romans of to-day, in the matter of road making. From every seaport and from every important city in Algeria roads and railways ramify in every direction, and are all trending toward the great and mysterious interior region known as the Desert. But, as they push further and further southward, the Great Desert vanishes before them, and is only heard of when the locust clouds come up and the scorching siroccos

sweep along the plains. More than fifteen hundred miles of railroad are now built in Algeria, or rather along the north coast of Africa. The various lines form one vast system, so that the traveller can enter Africa at Oran and journey clear through to Tunis. And these roads are well built, stone ballasted, with massive viaducts and gentle gradients; though the rolling stock consists of those hideous cars and wagons we see in France and Spain. The distance from Oran to Algiers is 421 kilometres, and the first-class fare is 48 francs; from Algiers to Constantine, 464 kilometres; from Constantine (or Kroubs) to Tunis, 450 kilometres, the whole distance being 1335 kilometres, or about 850 miles. The various branch lines extend from near Oran to Tlemcen and to Mascara; from Phillippeville and Constantine to Batna, El Kantara and Biskra, and one projected from the Port of Bone, and the main line to the Gulf of Gabes. Nowhere in the world does it seem to me is there such a magnificent opportunity for development and civilization as in Africa, and especially in that portion now controlled by the French. The French, as colonizers, are better than the English to deal with barbarous peoples. Before the Anglo-Saxons, barbarians and semi-civilized peoples melt away like snow before the sun. With the French, however, the case is different. They never exterminate, but assimilate. They certainly have very tough subjects in the stern and sullen Arabs, who hold themselves aloof in lofty scorn of the Europeans; but the French success with the Arabs of the cities, and even with the Jews and the Berbers, is evident.

The French have moved along several lines of pro-

gression and conquest. They have steadily advanced and held everything they have gained. In going from Algiers to Constantine you have a taste of North African quality in the great variety of scene and the glimpses into history afforded by towns along the line.

Though much of the route is monotonous, yet there are grand mountains, gloomy gorges and ravines where yet lurk the lion and the panther. Such gorges are the Portes de Fer, near the station of Sidi Brahein. Many of the towns have mournful memories of the native revolt of 1871, such as that of Palestro, a village 77 kilometres from Algiers, whose population of Tyrolese, French and Spanish immigrants was massacred in a manner peculiarly atrocious. At 294 kilometres from Algiers we reach Sétif, a very ancient city and a flourishing colony in the Middle Ages.

Not far from the station of Telegma, about 40 kilometres from Constantine, the most beautiful remains of Roman art in Africa were discovered in 1878. The mosaic floors are supposed to be of the first or second century and represent domestic and hunting scenes, with great beauty and fidelity.

The objective point of this long railroad ride is the famous city of Constantine, declared to be the most picturesque, as to its natural situation, in the world. It covers the summit-platform of a rock plateau, square in shape, with perpendicular sides rising nearly 1000 feet in places above the river Rummel, which flows around it on the north and east. This river, flowing through its cañon walls, is spanned by four natural bridges of rock, one of which supports the bridge by which the city is

reached, El Kantara. Constantine, formerly Cirta, was a sister city of Carthage, and the capital of Numidia. The name was changed to Constantine, about the year 313. It is a city celebrated in ecclesiastical history, also, and connected with the great St. Augustine and the early Christian bishops of Africa. Relics of Romans, churchmen, Arabs, Vandals are found here on every side. The last of the Deys here built a magnificent palace, that the world may well come to now and gaze at in wonder. Monuments with Latin inscriptions may be found on every hand, and a Roman aqueduct, repaired, brings water to the city. From Constantine, or, rather, from the port of Philippeville north of it, a railroad passes southwardly into the desert. At present you can go no further than Biskra, 230 kilometres, whence roads or trails branch out into the unknown. From Batna, about midway, we may reach the little known Aurès Mountains, where reside people supposed to be descendants of Romans, Byzantines and Vandals, and whose women are said to be among the most beautiful in the world.

About half way between Batna and Biskra is the great gorge El Kantara, so called from a famous Roman bridge seen here. The scenery here is very picturesque, mountain and desert scenes blended, and a forest of date palms marks, it is said, the northern limit of the desert fruit. For oases, we must push on to Biskra, the terminus of the railroad projection in this direction. Biskra is a charming desert town, composed mainly of mud buildings, with a great grove near and around it. The oasis of Biskra is said to contain 100,000 palm trees, and as it is abundantly supplied with water from running streams

and artesian wells, it has smiling fields and luxuriant gardens. Its climate is tropical, except during the winter months, and the air is pure and dry. It has been a favorite subject with the French writers on Algeria. Biskra is the northernmost of that archipelago of oases that lies across the great sea of the desert. From the mountain range south of Bâtna you gain your first glimpses of this sea of sand, a vast plain, sweeping away and away. It is like the ocean, boundless, save for the horizon's brim ; the image of the ocean with its isles and islets. This vast plain without limit, and unsurveyed, is the Sahara, and like the ocean it is constantly encroaching upon the fertile land, sweeping its sand billows upon the foot-hills of the mountains and sending its sand-storms flying over the Tell and the Metidja, even to the Mediterranean. Storms and hurricanes sweep over this vast plain as over the ocean ; its oases are the resorts of predatory Bedouins and of caravans, even as the palm islands of the Pacific are lairs for pirates and havens of rest for storm-tossed fleets. Nothing in nature, perhaps, can present so dreary an aspect as the plains of the Sahara, except the fire-scathed crater of a volcano ; and nothing so welcome to the traveller and the caravan as the green oasis. There are three generally accepted divisions of the N. African land : First, the littoral strip of territory called Tell, consisting of fairly fertile cultivated land extending from the coasts to the mountains, and the high plateau, and varying from fifty to one hundred miles in width. The Atlas Mountains cross the territory with a general trend from north-west to south-east : from Cape Nun, on the Atlantic, to Tunis, on the Mediterranean. They approach within thirty miles of the city of Algiers, and between their lateral

ridges are fertile valleys, like the Metidja. South of the mountains and plateau begins the Sahara, which may occupy as vast a territory as the geographers will admit ; and beyond this lie the oases, the third division. In most of the oases the palm groves are planted many feet below the surface of the desert, in the water-bearing sand beneath the surface-crust of gypsum. Thus, a mound of verdure may sometimes be seen rising dome-shaped above the sands, without any visible trunks to the trees.

Twelve or fifteen miles from Biskra is Okba. Here also are beautiful oases, and here is probably the " oldest Mahometan Monument in Africa," the mosque of Sidi Okba, an Arabian warrior who is said to have conquered this country in the sixtieth year of the Hegira, and this memorial mosque is dated from early years of the eighth century. It is about one hundred feet long, this primitive building, and from its minaret is a most charming view of the surrounding country. An inscription here, in Cufic characters, is said to be " perhaps the oldest Arabian inscription in the world," and reads : " This is the tomb of Okba, son of Nafa, May God have mercy on his soul." He and some 300 of his men were massacred here by the Berbers in the year of our era 822.

Tunisia, the latest acquisition of the French in North Africa is a natural continuation of Algeria. The city of Tunis occupies a position between the lakes or lagoons, while the ancient Carthage was nearer the open gulf. Of the modern city an English artist writes : " No words can do it justice. The great bay is almost land locked ; billowy peaks to the east ; in the dim distance the blue hills of the Zaghouan range, the mountains that look down upon the far-famed city of Kair-

wan ; directly in front the white houses of the Goletta—the present harbor of Tunis ; away to the westward the stony amphitheatre, rich with the memories of 2000 years, where once stood Carthage, the very spot from which Dido looked with longing eyes upon the white sails of her hero-lover as they floated over this lonely bay. Everywhere there are fine hills in graceful outline sweeping down to the blue waters of the gulf, and everywhere strange tropical trees, lofty date palms, and straggling prickly pears. I know of no city except Constantinople that occupies a site which can be compared with this. Even that of Ephesus is inferior in splendor, if not in interest. The great city occupied an amphitheatre sloping gently down to the edge of the gulf.” Such was the situation at Carthage. “The impression to-day is one of intense disappointment. The Roman wish has been fulfilled, and of the once glorious Carthage not one stone remains standing above ground.” “The whole site of the city is strewn with broken fragments of pottery, mosaics, sculpture, marbles, pillars, tiles. Everywhere, too, huge fallen masses of masonry are lying prone upon the earth. The site of Dido’s palace is shown, and beyond the extensive cisterns, vast subterranean structures with heavy vaulted roofs. In every case the masonry is of the most substantial character, showing how well the Phœnicians did their work.”

There is here a rich field for excavation. “Three towns lie here atop each other, one Punic, one Roman, the last Byzantine.” Tunis, now the chief city of this great gulf, “grew out of the ashes of the Roman colony, and received its autonomy only with Islam. The Arabs destroyed all evidences of Christian culture, overthrew

the temples, and with their fragments built their own mosques and palaces." Though Tunis has been declared more Oriental than the Orient, than even Cairo and Damascus, yet the inter-communication afforded by the railroad has robbed it somewhat of its distinctive character. Its bazaars may be more richly furnished than those of Algiers and Tlemcen, but they are substantially the same in character.

France has not been able to give much attention to the transformation of the people here; she has had too much to do in seeking to assure peace throughout the country.

The ethnographer finds the following elements in Algeria: (1) The true Berbers, (2) Arabianized Berbers, (3) the Arabs, (4) Algerians, (5) the Jews. As to the Koulouglis, or half-breeds, children of Turks and native women, and the negroes, they are so few as scarcely to merit special mention. In round numbers, there may be 1,000,000 Berbers, 1,500,000 Arab-Berbers, 500,000 Arabs, 500,000 Europeans, including the Algerians, and 35,000 Jews. Most of the negroes from the Soudan are found in the oases.

The dark type of the primitive population greatly resembles the Arab type, their distinctive features being less accentuated in the Arab-Berbers. Among the Berbers the bones of the skull are excessively hard and thick, and the children of their own accord practise striking the hardest object with their heads. All natives wear the beard, though the head is completely shaven, with the exception of a tuft of hair on the very top. The members of certain brotherhoods often let this tuft grow until they can braid it.

It is impossible to trace, even approximately, the physical characteristics of the new Algerian race, whose existence has but just commenced. The Berbers of the mountains inhabit houses grouped together in small villages on peaks and hill-crests difficult of access. Their domestic animals live under the same roof, separated from the family by a low wall. The Berber costume consists of a long shirt, over which is the burnoose, the legs, arms and the top of the head being bare. The women's costume consists simply of a woollen, shirt-like garment, belted around the waist. A handkerchief around the head, immense ear-rings, a necklace, bracelets and anklets complete the attire. Men and women wear their clothes till they fall to pieces. There is little variety in their food, their most common dish being the *couscous*, or lumps of flour cooked with the steam from the broth of the meat, and strongly seasoned with butter or oil ; add to this various fruits, such as dried grapes and figs, artichokes, beans and peas. The Arab-Berbers live sometimes in *gourbis*, or huts of branches, sometimes in tents made of camel's hair. Each hut or tent shelters an entire family. A group of huts is called a *dechera*, or hamlet ; if composed of tents, it takes the name of *douar*. They wear the costume of the Berbers, and in addition, sometimes, the *haik*, a long piece of very light cloth, first wrapped around the body, then brought around the head, where it is kept in place by a camel's hair cord. On great occasions the horsemen wear riding-boots of red leather. All the Arabs live in tents, and are nomadic. Their food consists of *couscous* of wheat or barley, and the various fruits, especially dates of the desert, of which they are extremely fond,

mutton when they can get it, and milk. They are very frugal, and more temperate than other natives.

The city dwellers have adopted a more complicated costume, consisting of bulgy trousers, a broad red belt of wool or silk, a close waistcoat, and a jacket of cloth or silk. On the feet shoes without heels, or with quarters turned in; on the head two caps, one of cotton, the other of red wool, placed over the first; over the shoulders a light burnoose. The native women in the towns are often as light as European brunettes, losing the dark color they had in the country; and this change is so marked that one would be likely to consider them a separate race. They lead a more comfortable life than the country women, and even if they are deprived of the privilege of going out with uncovered faces, they find some compensation for this in dressing more coquettishly. Their costume differs from that of the men only by its elegance; the belt is more graceful, the jacket of richer material, the coarse shirt of the men is replaced by a garment of gauze, and the scanty waistcoat forms a bodice open at the throat. The *coiffure* alone is entirely different; the hair is brought to the top of the head, and around it is twisted a fringed silk handkerchief. The young girls braid their hair into one long plait and wear a sort of velvet cap adorned with sequins. Out-of-doors the women wear a little veil, which hides all the face below the eyes, while a large piece of cloth falls around the body, hiding its general shape. The most elegant houses differ little in furnishing from the tent; carpets, mats and small mattresses serve as seats during the day and as beds at night. The jewels and gala dresses are piled up in

trunks of native wood. Among the poor the meals are served on the ground ; among the rich on a copper tray placed on a very low and small table.

All eat out of the same dish ; the solid food is taken with the fingers, the liquid with wooden spoons. The men are served first, while the women eat by themselves what is left. Politeness demands that the host, no matter what his rank may be, should himself serve the guest ; he first tastes the dishes before presenting them ; he points out the best morsels to his guests, and if the latter hesitates to take them puts them into his mouth. When the *douar* receives a distinguished guest the repast is furnished by the whole community. The inhabitants of the *douar* then arrange themselves around the guest in a series of concentric circles, graduated by rank. Each dish, after having been tasted by the guest, is served successively to the different circles, and the bones, carefully gnawed, are finally given to the dogs, silent, though expectantly watching the proceedings from the outermost circle. All natives have an abiding faith in amulets as a means of preserving health. These amulets are small scraps of paper on which are traced a few cabalistic signs and words from the Koran. The natives of the town are more given to ablution than the Arabs, these latter being extremely filthy. The children of all the Algerian races are extremely precocious and very intelligent, but their development is early arrested and the intellectual faculties weaken rapidly.

The inferior condition of the native women, which aids in the transmission by heredity of many faults, plays an important part in the tendency to degeneracy. They rarely are acquainted with anything beyond their

own *douar* and their intelligence concentrates itself on a restricted circle of vulgar ideas. The men never condescend to converse with the women, and these are forbidden to talk with strangers. Universal ignorance prevails, except that every little community is likely to have its *thaleb* or scholar learned enough to read a little of the Koran. The Moslem religion is far from being in a pure state in Algeria. There is no tribe but has its favorite saint, to the tomb of which the people repair constantly to pray. The body of the saint is sheltered by a domed chapel, called *koubba*, which has in the middle a catafalque covered with silk and brocaded stuffs, and on the walls banners of silk and offerings. Sometimes the *koubbas* merely cover the spot where a saint has passed the night. The natives are very superstitious and fear the evil eye, not only for themselves but for their cattle. The numerous idiots met with are objects of great attention because they are supposed to be possessed of a devil whom it is prudent to propitiate. As a rule the farther you go towards the desert, the purer is the Arabic spoken by the people. The Algerians of course speak French, and generally without the slightest accent.

The native Jews speak among themselves a corrupted Arabic with which are mixed a considerable number of French words with Arabic inflections. In the province of Oran Spanish is generally spoken. In character the Berbers are revengeful, courageous, and honest among themselves, though rapidly learning the Arab vice of cheating the stranger. The social unit among the Berbers is the *kharrouaba* or members of one family, sometimes admitting others ; and sometimes families and

even villages unite in common interest, and thus a little republic may be formed. Each village is governed by an *Amin*, or sort of mayor, who is assisted by a few of the chief men of the village. The *djemaa* or municipal council, meets once a week to deliberate on the affairs of the community, all the males from the age of sixteen taking part. The Moslems here have no real clergy, and the Mufti is more a magistrate than a priest. The caste of the Marabouts has great religious influence, the quality of which is hereditary in the male line of all those who have led an exemplary life or who have consecrated themselves exclusively to the defence of Islamism against infidels. They used to live in convents. All do not know how to read, but to them is intrusted the education of the children. This education consists in teaching them a few prayers, some chapters of the Koran, which they learn by heart, and a little reading and writing. Even the very "learned" Marabouts never pass the line of instruction in European primary schools. Though polygamy is authorized by the Koran, the great majority of the Moslem population do not take advantage of it, simply because they cannot afford it, and for no other reason. The woman's position is practically that of a slave to her husband, and an ill treated one at that. Sabbatical rest is unknown to the Moslem; the Friday services, at which they are obliged to assist, last but an hour, and they can then employ the rest of the day in their usual labors. On the plains life is comparatively easy, seed time and harvest taking up about three months in the year, and the rest is spent in idleness. The cattle, sheep and horses require only to be led to fresh pasture, and are attended by the children. The

women make the *haïks* and *burnouses*, the chief articles of clothing for all. The men make the wooden part of their ploughs and plait baskets and ropes, which, with a two edged pick axe, made by a blacksmith, constitute their stock of agricultural tools. Earthen and wooden dishes, a pitcher and a kettle, comprise the kitchen and table utensils. The furniture consists of a few mats, a wooden chest, and sometimes a carpet. In the cities, industries are more active and diverse ; there are found especially potters, dyers, armorers, blacksmiths, tinkers, carpenters, tanners and an incredible number of shoemakers ; which seems surprising in a country where so many of the people go barefoot. Every Thursday the city women pass the afternoon at the Moorish baths, where they wear the most beautiful toilets. On Friday they go to the cemetery, less to pay regard to the dead than to take the air in perfect liberty. This seems a strange place for a reunion, but it is probably selected as less exposed to the gaze of strangers.

To-day all the tribes have lost the freedom they enjoyed under the Turks ; the natives are directly governed by agents in the pay of France, and their laws are greatly simplified. They have preserved all the practices of their religion, and the rare attempts at proselytism, either by the Protestants or by Romanists, have been without result. The principal Arab settlements of those hordes who came here, driven by hunger, from the shores of the Red Sea, have been in the southern parts of the province of Oran (Tlemcen) and in Morocco. The nomadic life has such a charm for those who have tried it in their youth, that it is impossible to even think of drawing the Arabs of the high plateaux, or of the

Sahara region, from this mode of existence. They are like sailors, in their love of the monotony of vast expanses and solitude.

A passport is not necessary in Algiers, but you are required, at the hotels, to give those items of information about yourself that the police prize so highly. Then you are free to go and come at your leisure.

Of the various excursions in the neighborhood of the city, that to Blidah and the gorge of Chiffa is the most often recommended. At the former place are wild and rugged scenery, great rocks, and running streams, and troops of wild monkeys, that sometimes show themselves to tourists. The trip to Blidah I took on my way to Oran. The line first skirts the beautiful bay and then, at ten kilometres distance from the city, turns to the southwest and enters the Metidja, the plain of great fertility that lies between the Atlas foot-hills and the Sahel. Tall eucalyptus trees at times line the track and are seen in many groves. Tree planting on a vast scale has been undertaken in Algeria and with the most beneficial results; where formerly were sun-scorched desert, and sterile hillside, or damp miasmatic swamp-land, the beneficent eucalypti spread their limbs, filling the air with balsamic odors in place of miasm and giving shade and fertility. The town of Boufarik is an example of what European energy can accomplish in Africa, with its stream-bordered streets, shaded avenues and squares, where was once a swamp so malarious that the first settlers died like sheep. The native trees of value are the cork, cedar, ilex, the Aleppo and maritime pine, the olive, fig, the citrus family and the palms. But of all trees the Australian gum trees, the eucalypti, are the

most valuable in the *reboisement* of Algeria. That it is the determined purpose of the French to afforest the north coast of Africa is a fact that commands the approbation of the world. The Metidja is estimated to contain 500,000 acres of land, one-half which can be cultivated with success by irrigation by means of artesian wells and reservoirs. The cereals flourish, but it is in small fruits and vegetables that Algeria excels.

Other pursuits than agriculture draw hither many strangers, especially the pursuit of sport; but, if the farmer's rewards are meagre, so are the returns of the sportsman. The season for shooting lasts from September to February, and, as in France and all her colonial possessions, one must have a shooting license. Partridges, snipe, ducks and woodcock are sometimes found, but not in abundance. Yet there are many wild animals remaining in this country, where "Gerard the lion-killer" found such sport in his time. In the twelve years between 1873 and '84 there were killed above 30,000 wild animals, including 181 lions and 1,000 panthers. The rarest sport is that of falconry, which certain of the Arabs indulge in at the South. It is said that the art of training falcons is hereditary, and it requires great skill and patience. The hawks are snared and hooded and perched upon their master's shoulders, which are protected by strips of leather. They are fed only by their captor, and when they have become attached to him, after two months or so, they are taken to the field, hooded, and the hood removed only when the quarry is in sight, at which they fiercely dash.

It was a short run of 30 miles to Blidah, a town of

8,000 inhabitants. It lies at the base of the Atlas range, with the Metidja spread below to the Sahel beyond. An omnibus carried me to the hotel, where I found a neat room, a cool inner court overhung with vines, good meals and excellent service. I went first to see the *Bois Sacré*, the sacred grove of olives, in the suburbs of the town. These trees are sacred because they contain and shelter the *koubbas*, or mosque-like tombs of some Arab saints. They are indeed beautiful, these white and marble-like structures, with domed roofs; and the giant olives hung with trailing mosses rise above and enclose them in a twilight gloom that is conducive to thoughts of worship. Now and then the sun strikes through the canopy of foliage and draws a tracery of leaf and limb upon the marble surface of the tombs, painting these fleeting pictures all day long. Silent Arabs glide stealthily away emerging from the gloom, pausing a moment to pray perhaps, then disappearing again without a sound.

When I resumed my journey next morning I found the train crowded with excursionists, for the scientific men of all France had come to attend a meeting at Oran. They were true excursionists nevertheless, and all eager to get their money's worth as they went along. The infrequent towns along the line, as they are generally at a distance from the railroad, much resemble each other, and hardly any one is of conspicuous interest. Most of these towns are of recent growth, dating from the French invasion. The remains of the Arabs consist chiefly of the omnipresent *koubbas*, which gleam white on the hill-crests, or adorn some swelling elevation of the plain. We reached the station of Oran at

about eight o'clock in the evening. An unusual influx of strangers, owing to the assembling at Oran of the French Congress of the "Society for the Promotion of Science," promised to fill every hotel and *pension*. But I found a room at the Hôtel Continental, and there seemed to be accommodations sufficient for the 500 strangers attracted by the fêtes promised to the Scientific Congress. Bull fights and excursions, illuminations and native dances, all these were in store for the traveller who would remain; but I had come merely to learn the time of departure of the steamship for Spain. This information gained I was ready to leave next day for Tlemcen *via* the French-Arab village Aïn-Temouchent. Several days later I returned and devoted four days to an examination of Oran. I found it more interesting than my previous view had promised. Not that I would recommend it as a place of resort either for health or pleasure, though a week might be passed there without loss of time or patience.

The city takes its name from the ravine (Wahran) behind it. It was the seaport of the kingdom of Tlemcen, and attracted many of the Moors who were driven out from Spain. At the beginning of the 16th century the corsairs of Oran had become so troublesome that Cardinal Ximenes fitted out two expeditions against the city. In the second, which he led in person, the city was taken and the citadel, supposed to be impregnable, was carried by storm. This *Kasba* is a vast fortification. The walls rise 40, 50 and in places perhaps 100 feet above the roadway; they throw out buttresses, project ornate sentry-boxes, and frown upon the steep ravines as well as directly upon the most thickly settled

portion of the city. In fact, one can hardly turn a corner without coming upon a fortress wall, a stone tower or vestige of some demolished castle. Many of the houses are built into and out of these ancient walls; the city is full of ruins and the suburbs are seamed with the lines of former military construction. The scars of sieges and earthquakes are mostly covered with vegetation, as every available plot of earth supports a garden overrunning with vines, fig trees and flowering plants. The Spaniards held the place for two centuries, lost it in 1708, retook it in 1732, and finally surrendered it in 1792; and the Algerines kept it till the French conquest in 1830.

No port of the Mediterranean, perhaps, can exceed Oran in picturesqueness. The town itself is built up the steep northern slope of the hill, the great ravine, Wahran, almost bisecting its upper portion, but filled in towards the sea and covered over with buildings. A thousand feet above the town rises the hill crowned by the fort of Santa Cruz; a little before it stands a Gothic chapel crowned by a colossal statue of the Virgin. The white figure seems to extend its blessings to those who have performed the work of suppressing here the religion of Mahomet. But, as if to mock this endeavor of the Christians to commemorate their achievement, the Arabs have erected a tomb to their patron saint of Oran, Sidi Kebir, on the crest of the ridge, several hundred feet above, and the white dome of this "*Marabout*" is visible further than the marble figure of the Virgin. And in the town beneath the great mosque of the Moors is as vigorously protected by the Government as the cathedral of the Catholics. One evening, an hour

before sunset, I climbed the steep road that leads to the fortress of Saint Grégoire, a few hundred feet below the chapel, and then clambered over the steep to the chapel and fort above. The ascent was so sharp that I could hardly maintain a foothold ; yet up this mountain, more than once, had mail-clad soldiers dashed to the charge. I finally reached the fort only to find the entrance barred and the structure deserted. It rose above me stern and frowning, without a projecting scarp or abutment by which one might lay hold and climb to its parapet ; yet this same fortress had been twice taken by assault ; how, no one can now conceive. The only approach to it at all is along a knife-like crest on which you may sit astride, and even then there seems but slight hold for scaling ladders to be placed. How many must have perished ere the strong walls were taken ; every crimson rock must have been drenched in the blood and the entire crest covered with the corpses of the slain. Beyond, across a deep gap in the ridge, there is a table-topped hill even higher where, on the edge of the precipice, is the white tomb of Sidi Kebir. From this dominating point the fortress could be bombarded, and doubtless the troops of Ximenes brought cannon here and first opened a breach in the walls before they pressed on to carry it by assault. The view from the chapel, fort or tomb is most magnificent. To the north the far-sweeping horizon line of the Mediterranean, east the harbor, and beyond a yellow coast crowned by the distant mountain of Kristel ; from the base of the hill stretches the town, with creamy walls and roofs of sunburnt tiles, its surface broken by domes and minarets and the towers of church and cathedral.

At least eight forts, including the two on the hill, can be seen ; they guard every strategic point and thrust out their massive walls from every hill and angle of the wall. For this city is still surrounded by walls, with bastions and gates, and is guarded as in the time of the Turks and Moors. Beneath and towards the west a projecting promontory, some four miles from Oran, shelters a beautiful bay and quiet village. The point is strongly fortified and the fort of El Kébir, said to cover the site of one previously erected by the Romans, has undergone as many vicissitudes as that above Oran. Reminiscences of Spanish occupation are found here in the arms of Ferdinand over the fountain at the entrance, and on the shore of the bay towards Oran in some warm mineral baths known as *Les Bains de la Reine*, from the visit of Isabella early in the 16th century, with her infant daughters. An excellent road leads around the coast in this direction, leaving the fort beneath high cliffs, passing through a short tunnel, and all the way giving far-reaching views of the sea. The ravine and steep escarpment of the hill towards the town are thickly planted with pines so as to form a dense forest in refreshing contrast to the denuded rocks around. Some of the trees are a foot in diameter, and all are carefully tended under the oversight of the same wise Frenchmen who are looking to the future reclamation of these barren hillsides. By this means they have entirely changed the aspect of the scenery and added a new element of beauty to the view. Although the hills seem barren yet they are covered, as are the plains, with flowers of every hue, that spread out sheets of color here and nestle in sheltered places there, growing

out of crevices in the rocks and in the nooks and crannies of the fort. Perhaps the best place whence to view the castle-crowned hill is from the terrace or garden rising above the fort and planted everywhere with shrubs and flowers. Winding walks lead all about and through the branches of pines and date-palms gleams the red hillside with its yellow-walled forts. Some of the terraces are covered with a small vine bearing thick mats of flowers and are perfect sheets of purple bloom. Here also you look down upon the enclosed harbor, the scene of busy maritime life, where there are sometimes a dozen steamers moored and where a thick cluster of lateen rigged vessels occupies the inner quarter of the mole. Railway tracks lead out to the main station, a mile beyond, and thence run to Algiers, to Tunis, and far into the border land of the great desert. This port of Oran is at a time not far distant destined to be the great centre for an immense commerce with the interior of Africa perhaps, and certainly of Morocco. Oran has a museum with a well-arranged collection of marbles and mosaics, mostly obtained from towns to the north. These mosaics are all Roman, and some of them cover a surface of fifteen square feet and are of excellent workmanship. I have mentioned the mosque. Its minaret, detached from the main structure, is a conspicuous object in the centre of the town and is beautifully ornamented with border tiles. The main entrance of the mosque is handsome, but it is a restoration by a French artist and lacks the charm of antiquity. Nobody seemed to know where Tlemcen was when I made inquiry at Oran, but at last I was told to go to Aïn-Temouchent by rail and there take the diligence.

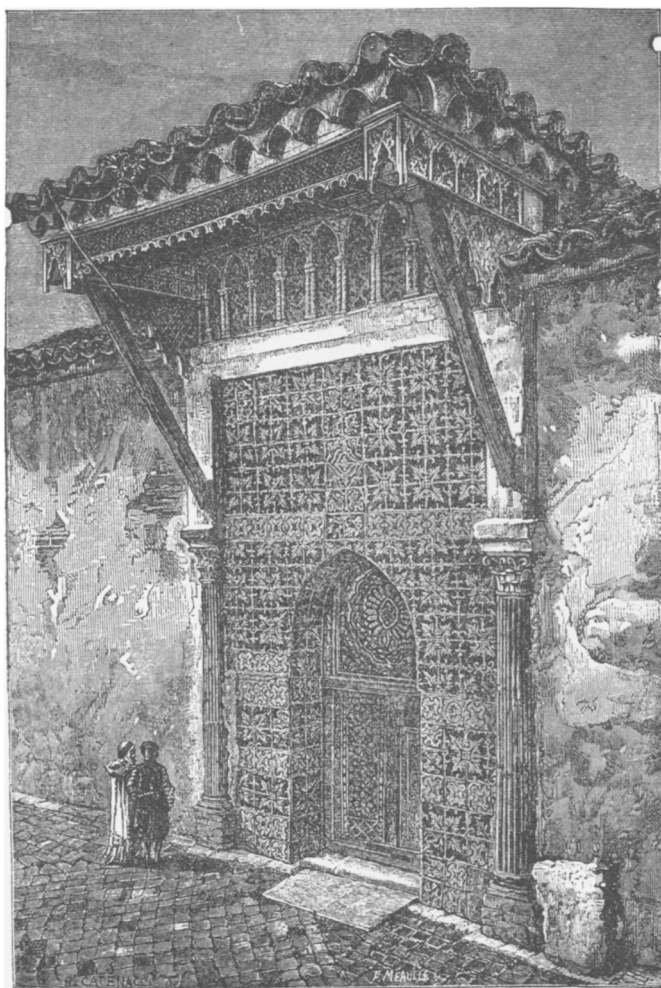
This I did. The roads were excellent and the scenery was interesting. To maintain this highway to Tlemcen in a perfect state, the road menders are stationed at intervals, who fill the ruts with broken rocks, and lay out long beds of this material, which the diligence must drive over because large rocks are laid on the smooth portion of the road. Our course, consequently, was a very sinuous one, as the driver had to veer from side to side to avoid the lines of rocks.

The first distinct sign of an approach to the desert was a group of Arab tents and a drove of camels. The camels were ranging the barren pasture land and seemed as much at home as cows in a field of clover.

Along in the afternoon we climbed the outermost brim of the valley in which Tlemcen was situated, and saw it before us, a fair city of mosques and minarets rising from leafy gardens.

Tlemcen is unique. It is a Moorish or Arab city, of ancient date, and with architectural monuments that remind one of the Alhambra. It was about 1,100 years ago that the Arab city was founded here, upon the ruins of what the Vandals had left of the Roman city Pomaria. During 400 years, Tlemcen enjoyed great prosperity. It was a great commercial centre and contained at one time, it is estimated, 5,000 Genoese, Catalan and Venetian merchants, who occupied a quarter by themselves. The city is surrounded by several lines of fortifications, for it has been many times besieged and taken.

I began a tour of the city with the great mosque, Djamaa-el-Kébir, in the Place d'Alger. It is not notable above even the mosque in the city of Algiers, though its court



GATE OF A MOSQUE, TLEMCEN.

is paved with Algerian onyx, and the basin of its fountain is of the same material. It has seventy-two square columns and a beautiful *Mihrab*, or prayer niche, ornamented with arabesques. The minaret is about 100 feet high, and from its cupola I got a view of the city that rewarded me for all the journey. The mosque dates from 1136. Another mosque within the walls is now used as a schoolroom. This is the mosque of Sidi Ahmed Bel Hassan el Ghomari and its *mihrab* is decorated with arabesques as airy and delicate as any in the Alhambra. There are two other mosques with very beautiful minarets, just outside and below the western wall. The finer of the two is that of Sidi el Halani, or the sweet-meat maker, with a minaret decorated with mosaics and a great court with arabesques, and with columns of Algerian onyx. It has finely carved ceilings and is comparatively modern, being only about 500 years old. This mosque lies under the hill, and as you descend you can look down upon the minaret, and the court, and view the ground plan of the buildings. Upon the square top of the minaret, as upon that of every tower in the city is the huge bulk of a stork's nest with the great birds keeping guard. "Before the Arabian Conquest," wrote Mungo Park, "or about the middle of the seventh century, all the inhabitants of Africa, whether descendants from Numidians, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Vandals, or Goths, were comprehended under the general name of Mauri, or Moors." All these nations were converted to the religion of Mahomet during the Arabian empire and among the first must have been the dwellers in this ancient city Tlemcen, for we find tombs of the saints over 1,000 years old.

About a mile from the city is the most venerated of them all, that of Sidi Bou Medina. Leaving the city by the gateway of Bou Medina, I went to the cemetery which was crowded with women, closely veiled, and gathered as usual in groups about the tombs, and especially around the square monument of Sidi Senousi, the founder of the sect of the Senousiya.

Some one has written : " Regarding the scene from a purely artistic point of view, we can imagine no more fitting subject for a painter than this group of Arabs at their devotion ; nature their temple, its altar the setting sun, their faces toward Mecca, their hearts towards the Prophet, their every attitude breathing devotion and faith." The cemetery is thickly set with graves, and one needs caution not to stumble over the numerous headstones, which are quaintly shaped and carved, and many of them picked out in colors, red, green or yellow. A solemn place this, and conducive to reflection, with its many memorials of the dead and its venerable olive trees. It should be seen by moonlight, however, to be most effective ; then indeed does it suggest an unreal city by the banks of the quiet river. Beyond the graveyard is the mosque of Sidi Bou Medina, entered by a narrow way, sometimes closed by doors of bronze, doors of such exquisite workmanship as to suggest the highest art. The pattern is an interlaced geometric figure and they recalled to me the bronze doors of the mosque of Cordova. The decoration of the mosque is good, but much is modern and its effect is somewhat tawdry. Stepping down, below the level of the court, we enter the *Koubba*, or tomb, of the saint of Tlemcen. This tomb is approached through a small court, in which is a well

with a curbing of stone which has been deeply worn by the use of 700 years. An old Arab sat here, guarding the sacred place from unbelievers who should venture to approach with irreverent feet. The interior of the tomb is hung with silken draperies, banners that are said to have been taken in Spain, ostrich eggs and other offerings of the sons of the desert. In one corner is an object seemingly incongruous, and that is a grandfather's clock. How many years it has ticked away the time in that ancient tomb, no one knows. Directly in front of the entrance way to the outer court, rises that of the mosque itself, ornamented with mosaic tiles made in Morocco. Everywhere, even in this most sacred place of the Arabs, I was treated with respect, and received with a grave courtesy that would have repelled the idea of a fee—had it not been for the ever extended palm. Sidi Bou Medina has a delightful situation, and the surrounding Arab village, though dirty, yet is charming in little stone houses and walled vineyards and gardens. On our way back, we made a *detour* that took in another holy *Koubba* in a delightful cemetery, that of Sidi-Yakoub, which is of the general shape and symmetry of the tombs of Blidah, in the sacred olive grove. Not far from this is the great minaret of the Aghadir, a mosque long since destroyed, and which is over 1,000 years old. All about the plains and slopes this side of Tlemcen are the ruins of walls, towers and minarets. Three circles of fortifications can yet be made out, surrounding the city. That afternoon we went out exploring in a different quarter and came upon an open field, gay with scarlet poppies and dotted with knotted old olive trees. Climbing away beyond, the pathway led up the cliff, several hundred feet

high, and after much difficulty I reached a plateau above. Here I found another *koubba*, placed upon the verge of the cliff, and visible from afar.

The view from the *koubba* is magnificent, taking in the whole valley in which Tlemcen is built, the mountains of Morocco beyond, and a faint glimmer of the distant sea. Down the face of this cliff fall two sparkling streams, one towards Tlemcen, and the other towards Mansoura. Mansoura is another city, a city that has perished all but its walls. During one of the long sieges of Tlemcen, nearly 600 years ago, the chief in command turned his military camp into a city by building around it a wall forty feet high, enclosing about 250 acres. At points, about 100 feet apart, high towers were erected, battlemented and pierced. From the plateau I counted eighty towers yet remaining. It was a beautiful scene, that broad plain bounded by hills, in its centre the twin cities, Tlemcen and Mansoura, the one living, the other dead. High above the walls and towers rises the great minaret of the mosque Abou Yakoub commanded to be built. It is about 120 feet high and is called "by far the most beautiful monument of Moorish times in Algeria." It is half in ruins, but has been strengthened by the French. It resembles the great tower of Seville, the Giralda, and, like that tower, is ascended by a series of ramps, instead of stairs, so that a horseman might ride to the summit. Were this the only monument here, tourists would come to view it. As to its color an artist writes : "Photographs may help you a little to imagine the place ; but, having looked at them you must shut your eyes and color minaret and walls with richest, reddest ochre ; you must

clothe the hills in living green, fill the space between hill and sky with soft warm skies of southern blue, and then set the whole picture floating and palpitating in golden mists. This minaret is unlike anything else in the world. It is like a gigantic monolith of solid Indian gold, and is as wonderful as the pyramids."

I returned to the city through the Fez gate. The air was pure and bracing, under the hot sun, and filled with flower perfume and the hum of bees. "It had been one of those celestial days when heaven and earth meet and adorn each other; it seemed a poverty that we could only spend it once."

I went to the market, one of the primitive kind, where vegetables were found in one corner, meat in another, and articles of domestic manufacture in another. All the marketing is done in the morning, and by noon the place is swept and garnished for health's sake; for these Arabs are now under French rule, and can no longer sit all day in the sun and fester and emit evil odors. But the most interesting of all is the Arab quarter, where the streets are narrow, where the shopkeepers sit all day in little dens about eight by ten feet square, each one with different articles for sale. Here we see the handicraftsmen at work; the shoemakers who make those wondrous slippers without heels, of gorgeous red and yellow, ornamented with gold and silver braid, and the tailor, whose duties are not very arduous, as all his costumes are of the same pattern. It is thoroughly Oriental and yet African. In these dens you find groups of gentlemanly Arabs, who are glad to have you join them in a cup of coffee and help them "at doing nothing all day in a row." Every

street has a minaret terminating it or rising at one side, and upon the summit surface of every minaret is a bulky nest, the home of the solemn storks. I sat on the hotel roof one night and watched a stork outlined against the amber sky, and the moon came out and lit up the narrow streets through which noiselessly walked hooded and sheeted Arabs, like a crowd of ghosts. It was my last picture of Tlemcen.